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**From:** Higuchi, Dean  
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**Subject:** EPA News Release: EPA Announces \$25 Million to Improve Water Quality, Infrastructure in Arizona

This is being released today,

**For Immediate Release:** December 22, 2015

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## **EPA Announces \$25 Million to Improve Water Quality, Infrastructure in Arizona**

**SAN FRANCISCO** – The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced \$25 million in funding to Arizona for investment in statewide improvements in local drinking water and wastewater infrastructure and the reduction of water pollution. The funds are directed to the Water Infrastructure Finance Authority (WIFA), which will use them to provide low-cost loans for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects and to provide funding for innovative water quality improvement projects.

“This substantial investment at the federal level helps communities develop the infrastructure needed for clean, safe drinking water and proper wastewater treatment,” said Jared Blumenfeld, EPA’s Regional Administrator for the Pacific Southwest. “EPA is committed to protecting the water resources so important to public health and Arizona’s economy.”

Funds provided through WIFA will go to a variety of water quality infrastructure improvement projects throughout Arizona, with an emphasis on small and disadvantaged communities and projects that promote sustainability. Drinking Water SRF money funds public and private community and non-community water systems to support projects such as treatment, distribution, transmission, source, and storage infrastructure. Clean Water SRF money is used for publicly owned municipal wastewater system projects that would build or improve treatment plants, sewer collection systems, water reuse facilities and stormwater infrastructure.

Some EPA funds are planned to go to a broader range of innovative infrastructure projects to improve the State's water quality in the face of evolving threats from climate change. Examples include watershed protection, forest restoration, and stormwater management projects that utilize floodplains and natural landscapes to filter pollutants and protect water quality, minimize the area and impacts of floods, reduce the burden on public drainage infrastructure, and increase groundwater recharge.

WIFA anticipates allocating \$915,000 to Buckskin Sanitary District, located along the Colorado River near Parker, Arizona. WIFA has previously used EPA funds to provide approximately \$4.3 million in loans and \$65,000 in technical assistance to the District to improve and expand wastewater service and eliminate failing septic systems. With the newest three-year WIFA design loan the District will design plans for further expansion of its collection and treatment services. When construction is complete on this phase of the project, an additional 1,762 people will have sewer service and the failing septic systems will be eliminated.

Previous Arizona SRF funds directed to WIFA have provided \$42 million to the City of Prescott to upgrade and expand the wastewater treatment system at their airport. The facility can now produce higher quality reclaimed water for reuse purposes such as irrigating sports fields, golf courses, and commercial landscapes; restoring riparian habitats and recharging groundwater aquifers.

EPA has awarded \$615 million in federal funding for Arizona's Clean Water and Drinking Water State Revolving Fund programs since their inception in 1988 and 1996 respectively. The funds are used for a wide variety of water quality projects including watershed protection and restoration, water and energy efficiency, wastewater reclamation, and traditional municipal wastewater treatment systems including nonpoint source pollution control. The funds also support drinking water infrastructure, as well as drinking water plant operator training, and technical assistance.

The EPA's Pacific Southwest Region administers and enforces federal environmental laws in Arizona, California, Hawaii, Nevada, the Pacific Islands and 148 tribal nations—home to more than 48 million people.

For more information on EPA Region 9's State Revolving Fund program, visit:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region9/water/grants/srf-loan-prog.html>

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Thanks!

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